

## Claims

We claim:

1 1. A method for classifying images of faces according to gender, comprising  
2 the steps of:

3 supplying a vector support machine with a plurality of training  
4 images, the training images including images of male and female faces;  
5 determining a plurality of support vectors from the training images for  
6 identifying a hyperplane;  
7 supplying the support vector machine with a test image; and  
8 classifying the gender of the test image with respect to the hyperplane.

1 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

2 scaling the training images to locate the faces; and  
3 warping the scaled images to locate facial features.

1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the facial features include hair, and further  
2 comprising the steps of:

3 masking the scaled images to reduce the amount of hair.

1 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

2 reducing the resolution of the training images and the test image by  
3 sub-sampling before supplying the images to the support vector machine.

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- 2 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
- 3 maximizing a distance between the support vectors and error margins
- 4 of the hyperplane.

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